524 857 The stone game of the children is a simpler form of the same game played by adults. It is called sō'no and consists of a halved raffia leafstalk whose pith is hollowed out into 12 compartments, arranged in two rows. To the right and left of the ends there is a compartment, twice as big as the others, for captured stones. /302/

The procedure of the game corresponds precisely to that of the adults and is differentiated from the latter only by the fact that in each compartment there are four canna seeds as playing stones, instead of five palm nuts or other large fruit seeds.

524 857 153 The bowling game, mbə̄h (mbə̄h = bowling ball), in which the extraordinarily well-developed observational powers of the Negroes are triumphantly displayed, is quite noteworthy. The average European would probably cut a poor figure in this "child's play"; I at least declined to engage in it. For the bowling game [824] one must have about 30 of the pill-shaped Canna indica seeds. The game leader, A, takes these seeds in his hand; previously, he has already agreed upon a number, let us say 18, with a fellow player, B. This number must now be discovered by the players, or, as the Negro says, it must be "shown." A throws the balls out rapidly and gives each of them, by way of a name, as it were, the numbers from one to 30 as he throws them. Once all thirty balls are at rest -- having of course rolled every which way, in no particular order -- A points to the aforesaid eighteenth ball while B shuts his eyes as he does so, in order to point to the ball himself afterwards. Thereby A is prevented from cheating or -- as happens more frequently -- from making a mistake. In other words, it is a counter-test. In the subsequent throws, in which the same number counts, the players must indicate the aforesaid ball. This often happens with the second or third throw. The one who recognizes the ball first becomes the leader in the next game, in which another number is chosen.

As the final group game, we shall mention a memory game which is popular with boys six to seven years old. It is called bolō'mo, a name which is also applied to the main player and memory artist who must go to one side or outside the door and then answer. The questioner, seated in the circle of players, has ten

524 857 153 peppers, likewise called bolō'mo (from olō'mo = vegetable), in front of him and a banana leaf (okiā,') is inserted between each fruit. The questioning each time comes to an end at one of the bolō'mo which is then taken away, and the questioning begins all over again, until all the bolō'mo have been removed by this process of question and answer. The questions are as follows:

(a) a bolō'mo? = Oh Bolomo? (b) ē or assimilated ō = Yes! (c) ižū,a a dšǒ o yǎ? = Your father, he said something to you? (d) ta(d)a (a) džǒ ma na: kaa yǔ, ndǒ'ngo (or dzǎm) = My father, he said to me thus: not to fail in skittles (or affairs), that is, you are not to have any failures (in play or in seriousness). (e) dzidzi? = What is that? (f) bolō'mo = vegetable.

Now the questioner takes away the bolomo (the vegetable) and again asks: (a)-(d), then (e) dzidzi? (f) (o)kiǎ,i' = Leaf! (g) dzidzi? (h) bolō'mo. In the next round of questions the answers are: Leaf, leaf, vegetable, then leaf, leaf, leaf, vegetable, and so forth. /303/

All ten questions are uttered in very rapid tempo, usually to the accompaniment of rhythmical handclapping by the fellow players, in order to confuse the one answering as much as possible.

524 857 The simplest games of skill consist of fashioning droll figures out of a leaf (bǒń), Figure 105; braiding together strips of stalk of the Sarcophrynium in a special form (esǒ'n), Figure 106; and carving birds and other figures from raffia pith (onon-eśūsū), Figure 107.

Another group of skilled games includes the universally known rope games, which undoubtedly had their origin in the making of rope. Altogether, I am familiar with no less than 40 different figures among the Fang, of which different ones are developed from each other in series.

The highly developed, ingenious "patience games" probably had their origin in the rope games. The aim here is either to separate two objects that are joined (or to put together two separate objects), or to take apart apparently indivisibly conjoined parts.

A widespread game illustrated in Figure 108 is included in the first group. It could be called the two-string bow patience game (atśiń ebe). It consists of a stick of the bark of a raffia stalk with

[Text continues on page 179]

524 957 plantain leafstalk whose hollow, in addition, was plugged with "medicine," that is, pulverized leaves. The stalk with the ring lies on the ground, and the conjurer binds across his hand a piece of plantain leaf in which he has previously placed an identical leafstalk plugged with leaves, but without a ring. He then playfully strikes the ground with the leaf-covered hand and in so doing exchanges with lightning speed the two plantain leafstalks /307/. Then he invites the spectators to convince themselves that the ring has now been conjured out of it. While the spectators comply with this suggestion, the artist quickly puts the ring on his finger and also removes the plantain stalk.

4. Games of Adults

The Memory Game of the Dwarf Antelope

524 153 [184] To my knowledge, this game occurs only in the southern Pangwe region. Like the memory game of the children, it consists of reciting sentences which in this case, however, are not elicited by questions but are uttered by a single player. The sentences are particularly difficult, because they contain many words with guttural sounds whose pitch varies extraordinarily so that even the Pangwe easily makes a slip of the tongue.

[211] To aid their memory, my boys made use of a long raffia stick on which were strung a whole series of little transverse sticks carved out of raffia pith in such a way that first three pieces, each singly, then two, three, four transverse pieces, and so on, were ranged in groups, in a manner similar to balls on an abacus (Fig. 112).

In reciting each sentence -- there are 12 in all -- the previous sentences must be repeated backwards, and together they form a group which in each instance is introduced by the following verse:

sŏ' gbwē" , mvŏ́ń kī́ń = Sso antelope's horn: "gbuă" (onomatopoetic, in German, tü); rain: "king" (that is, distant thunder, onomatopoetic, in German, bum). The horn of the Sso antelope whistles: "tü," and behold, the rain answers with thunder: "bum."

524 153 [825] [821] As we know, the Sso antelope is the animal of the moon, while the moon is mistress of the seasons and thus of rain; if one blows on the horn, the rain, which according to the Pangwe produces thunder, will answer.

Once the twelfth group of sentences is finished, all previously 524 recited groups of sentences must be recited backwards.

153 539 Sentence 1: nǔ̄m okbǔ́n a ke a
Man of the dwarf antelope, he goes to

dzə̌ə́ngan a nkṓ[k] etə̌
fall in love in the lying trunk inside,

b(a) asə̌ngṓn-ogbwō.
with Assangon-Ogbwo.

The dwarf antelope man goes inside the prone tree trunk (which is hollow, so that the little antelope can use it as a hiding place) to fall in love with Assangon-Ogbuo, literally, the eldest daughter of the magician.

Sentence 2:

ngbūḗne ogbǔ́n a ke a
Offspring of dwarf antelope, it goes to
bə̌ nǔ́m okbǔ́n.
follow man antelope. /308/

Sentence 3:

ngā́-ogbǔ́n a ke a
Wife of dwarf antelope, she goes to

be ngbūḗne ogbǔ́n.
follow (the) little antelope.

Sentence 4: agbǔ́n abai (two antelopes) d'a ke a be nga agbǔ́n.

Sentence 5: agbǔ́n ala (three antelopes) d'a ke a bə̌ agbǔ́n abai (two).

Sentence 6: agbǔ́n ani (four antelopes) d'a ke a bə̌ agbǔ́n ala (three).

Sentence 7: agbǔ́n atan (five antelopes) d'a ke a bə̌ agbǔ́n ani (four).

Sentence 8: agbǔ́n asiēmen (six antelopes) d'a ke a bə̌ agbǔ́n atan (five).

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Sentence 9: agbŭ́ń zāngbwā́ (seven antelopes) d'a ke a bɛ̄ agbŭ́ń asiḗmen (six).

Sentence 10: agbŭ́ń mūóm (eight antelopes) d'a ke a bɛ̄ agbŭ́ń zāngbwā́ (seven).

Sentence 11. agbŭ́ń ebū́ (nine antelopes) d'a ke a bɛ̄ agbŭ́ń mūóm (eight).

Sentence 12. agbŭ́ń avŭ́m (ten antelopes) d'a ke a bɛ̄ agbŭ́ń ebū́ (nine).

[832]

Young lovers like to play the game with their girls, as may be surmised from the somewhat romantic text. Jokingly, the girl says that she will give herself only to the one who can go through the entire game without making a mistake.

The Memory Game (nkū́k ondūle or endĕle)

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This game is known only among the Fang and a number of adjoining Ntum kin groups, and it is supposedly indigenous. A flat staff with short, paired transverse extensions and vertically inserted knobs is used in the game. The end of the staff usually has a head carved on it (Fig. 113). Each pair of transverse extensions, along with the knob and the adjacent lower part of the staff, forms a segment on which eleven different points are designated for the answers (see Fig. 114).

The game may have developed from an older, simpler one in which the individual parts of the human body were enumerated. This notion is suggested by the designation of the staff as the body, of the carved end -- even when it is not a regular head -- as neck and head, by the tripartite arrangement of the transverse extensions -- absent in Figure 113 -- (corresponding to the upper arm, the

[822]
[831]

Fig. 112. Stick with Pieces of Raffia used as Mnemonic Device in the Memory Game of the Dwarf Antelope. About one-fourth actual size.

Memory Game, nkuk-ondüle, made of Wood, Southern Ntum Region. A little over one-fifth actual size.

Fig. 113

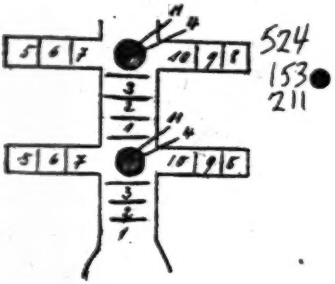

Fig. 114
Two Sections of the Memory Game nkuk-ondüle.

lower arm, and the hand), and finally by the upright knob, called tsăngetsă'ŭge (the red one; red as the color of reproduction, of life), by which originally the male sex organ was doubtless understood. The implement is thus unquestionably supposed to represent a human body whose members are multiplied. [822] [631]

The game is played by two people, one questioning, the other answering. The former, seated in the circle of listeners, holds the implement in his hand and indicates the various points that /309/ must be answered. At each one he calls out: "zĕ zĕ?=- What is that?" (phonetically assimilated and corrupted from dzĕ dzé). The principal player sits farther away and answers the questions in rhythmic song while the others stamp their feet or clap their hands in time. He is, of course, not allowed to make any marks to aid his memory, such as dividing a little stick into the corresponding number of sections. This is brainwork. [533]

The 11 questions, which are the same for each segment, go as follows:

1, 2, 3. (see the corresponding numbers in Fig. 114)

nkŭk ondüle wō'le.

Body (of the) ondüle here. That is the body of the ondüle.

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4. tsăngetsă'nge nie a tele ni(l) i, a mō,mendöge.
Red one, he, he stands here, o Momendöge!
There stands the red one, oh Momendöge (inventor of the game)!

5. mekĭe me ntĕm e nieli.
Breaking of the twig, it (is) here

6. mejidan me ntĕm e nieli.
Sawing off of the twig, it (is) here.

7. bi a ke a buman (or a siĕen) a
We, we go to meet each other at the
mbuman a nzĕn, a tade mō,mendöge.
meeting point of the road, oh father Momendöge
(that is, perhaps, joint of the femur).

8. kŭ,lŭ a bŭma.
Go away to Buma (supposedly an Essamongun village).

9. ye ma ke a bŭma.
(Interrogative:) I go to Buma? = Am I going to Buma by any chance?

10. = 7.

11. = 4.

When all the segments -- usually from eight to 10 -- have been answered from bottom to top, the questioner points to the neck piece:

zĕ zĕ = What is that? /310/

Answer: kĭ'n ondŭ'le e nieli
Neck (of the) ondüle it here,

and then he points to the head piece:

zĕ zĕ = What is that?
Answer: nnŏ' ondŭ'le a wŏ'le.
Head (of the) ondüle it here.

The main thing for the player, therefore, is always to remember how many segments he has answered, so that at the end he does not make a mistake and, instead of answering the two questions concerning neck and head, begins a new segment.

181 opinion is quite widely shared by foreign observers. "Much more intelligent and... more active and harder working than the average Negro... they also have more forethought... they compare with other Negroes as do Aryans with Semites and the red men /Rouges/ ... capable of acquiring a certain amount of intellectual cultivation and of performing all sorts of industries," wrote Largeau in 1900. Before him, Du Chaillu /had written/: "Proud and fierce warriors... clever and industrious... that will supersede... the degenerate tribes (of the Ogooué)," while Horn, who did not like the French at all, thought the "Mpangwe" of 1875 to be the "Prussians of Africa," which, considering his attitude and the period, was a compliment. Later, Trilles favorably compares their moral standards with those of Europeans; his Protestant colleague Grebert speaks of their "individualism," their "fierce love of liberty." The portrait admits, it is true, of some reservations: "brusqueness," "brutal frankness," along with "unreliability," "malice," and "greed for gain" for Largeau, "pride," "tendency to hoard," "stubbornness," for Grebert, "cruelty," "avarice" for Du Chaillu, "superstition" for Horn, while Compiègne thinks they "disappointed Admiral de Langle's hopes (for their ability to become assimilated)." It is a remarkable fact that these "defects" may just as well appear aspects of their "good qualities," just like the strictures on "anarchy" and "rebelliousness" that often turn up in the official reports.

All these evaluations still hold good, clearly subjective and /89/ nonscientific as they are, just as are those I have been able to make myself and which lead me to say that I have actually met among the Pahouin I associated with a large proportion of intelligent, energetic, high-spirited /fiers/ people, endowed with a sarcastic humor well illustrated in many recent novels and also in the giving of nicknames, especially to government officials, and in the celebrated caricatures of Monewoso among the Boulou.

114 153 The only scholarly work on this subject that I know is some research done in the Cameroons by Stoerkel, head of the Service de Psychotechnie et d'Orientation professional /Psychotechnical and Vocational Guidance Service/, which does not seem to have been published. This research was done in 1949-50 at the beginning of the construction of the Edéa dam. The studies revealed, among the Pahouin of the southern Cameroons, motor adaptability, concentration, and capacity for integration superior on the whole to those of other

ethnic groups in the same region, the Boulou subjects being classed first on these points among the Pahouin tribes. Intelligence tests and mental-age evaluations made among school children and lycée students gave similar results in comparison with Africans of the same age. On the other hand, a comparison with European children living in the Cameroons showed a certain inferiority, from which it is still impossible to draw definitive conclusions because of the scarcity of "culture-free tests" used at the time. Projective tests administered under the same conditions revealed schizoid tendencies with rather marked aggression and a fairly high frequency of the Oedipus fixation with some transference /assimilation/ from father to white man. The difference in level from neighboring tribes was less clear among the lycée students than among school children, and less clear among the latter than among the laborers at Edéa. It must be emphasized that these tests, especially the projective ones, involved a limited number of persons in particular situations outside the village milieu, that remains the background of the majority of their fellow tribesmen. I am not acquainted with the results of later research.

With regard to social psychology, we are also largely restricted to subjective evaluations in the same class as those mentioned at the beginning of this section. Allégret a half century ago remarked upon a defeatism more bitter since the Fang had come in contact with Europeans, and certain legends reported by Trilles and Largeau on the Jacob and Esau theme, with the white man in the role of the usurping younger brother, go some way to confirming this. Balandier has given a good description of contemporary expressions of this feeling of collective frustration, both in his Sociologie actuelle and in various articles, one of them with the significant title, "Les Fang, conquérants en disponibilité" /The Fang, Unattached Conquerors/, (nos. 175 and 173).

One striking trait, also emphasized by Balandier, is that of collective mistrust of successful persons. This may appear to contradict the previous statement about Pahouin individualism, but in fact it is precisely /90/ this individualism that produces a good share of the suspicion of the other individual (cf. in Ezo Boto, Ville cruelle, no. 182, the reactions of the hero Banda vis-à-vis the rebel Koumé).

We must also point out the psychological and social importance of akum, wealth, and of bîôm, possessions, especially imported possessions. Combined with the as yet little-studied concept of the